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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT Wednesday, December 15, 1937

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "THERE'S MANY A SLIP--" Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

--ooCoo--

Christmas counters in the stores this season all testify to the popularity of one particular article of feminine underwear -- the slip, or, if you prefer the full name, the costume slip. Gone are the corset-covers, bloomers, and gathered petticoats of yesteryear. Instead, there are slips -- and more slips. The explanation seems to be that the slip has proved itself the garment that gives the smoothest foundation for outside clothes. Milady's underwear today needs to be stream-lined, so to speak -- that is, smooth and form-fitting and one-piece for the close-fitting fashions in frocks and suits and coats.

So the shops are full of slips of many different fabrics, prices, styles, and colors. Just now at the holiday season the very fancy slips are most in evidence, but plenty of plain tailored styles can be had at any time of year. And though the prevailing color of the moment seems to be a rather deep pink -- what the salesgirls call "tea-rose," you can find plenty of white or flesh-colored slips as well as darker shades to go with dark winter clothes. And you can find slips in different fabrics -- pure-dye silk, and weighted silk, and silk and rayon mixed, as well as rayon and even linen and cotton. Some of the silks and rayons are crepe, others are satin. Some are cut straight; some on the bias. It's no wonder the Christmas shopper finds making a good buy in slips quite a problem.

The clothing people at the Bureau of Home Economics have spent considerable time looking into the matter of slips from the point of view of the housewife-shopper. And they have some tips to help her in wise buying.

To begin with, they say that slips are some of the best-labeled ready-made garments on the market. And a label, listeners, as your Aunt Sammy has often said -- a <u>good informative</u> label can be such a help to the shopper. Of course, not all slip-labels give the helpful facts but many of them do. In any case, it pays to read the label before you buy.

One point you'll want to check on is the fabric in the slip. You want to buy a fabric that will look well and give good service. It would be a pity to send your friend a slip that looked all right in the box but that wouldn't wash successfully, or split at the seams, or pulled out at places getting the most wear. So first look at the label to see what you can learn about the fabric. Find out if the material is pure-dye silk, or rayon, or weighted silk, or something else. If the slip is labeled "Pure-dye silk" and if it is a light color, it will contain no more than 10 percent metal weighting. And there's

no doubt that pure-dye silk lasts longer and gives much better wear than heavily weighted silk. You can't tell much by feeling of the fabric, for a heavily weighted or sized material may feel more firm and substantial than a pure-dye. If you want to know whether the silk is weighted or not, be sure to read the small type on the label for the word "weighted" usually appears inconspicuously. Many labels will carry the words "silk crepe" in large type and then underneath in small type and parenthesis will say "weighted."

Rayon fabrics are not weighted with metal but they may contain excessive sizing. The words "pure-dye" on light-colored rayon mean that the sizing or filling does not exceed 10 percent. If you are buying an inexpensive slip, you will find that generally a rayon gives much longer wear than a weighted silk. In a white slip, rayon has the added advantage of staying white while even the best pure-dye silk will eventually turn yellow with wear and washing. On the other hand, rayon lingerie-silk is inclined to fray easily and deeply, so a rayon slip will soon give way at the seams or hem if they are not especially well-finished.

Many slips have lived short and sad lives because they were made of material that shifted easily -- that is, the threads running in one direction would slide together leaving only the threads running in the other direction to hold the garment together at that point. The reason for shifting is an uneven or unbalanced weave. The warp is heavier than the woof, or vice versa. So there's another point to check on -- a firm, smooth, balanced weave. Some labels state that the fabric is non-shift silk. But you can test the fabric yourself by scratching it a little with your fingernail. If the threads are shifty, they will soon show it.

Trim and finish as well as workmanship are important, if you want to buy a slip that will give good service. Lace is the fanciest trim, the most likely to catch the shopper's eye probably, but often too fragile to give good wear. The thin places in the lace soon give way and then an otherwise good slip is doomed. Really good trim, on the other hand, will last as long as the slip. For example, faggotting done with a firm silk thread, or tiny scallops finished with firm, close buttonhole-stitch, or a simple shell edge. A bound edge is all right, too, if it is set deeply enough on the fabric so it won't pull out. Many so-called "bargain" slips have plain tops with small machine-made hems. In general, these are stretched and so tear out soon.

Whatever kind of trim you select for the top of the slip, make sure of one thing -- that the shoulder-straps are anchored below it on firm reinforced material. Otherwise, they are sure to pull out and perhaps ruin the slip for good and all.

Of course, you know that firm close stitches hold the side seams best and that silk thread holds far better than weak cheap mercerized thread. So, another point to investigate are the seams.

One last point. Listeners have been asking about buying these ready-packed slips -- the kind that are all done up and sealed in a gay wrapping so you can see only a little of the slip through a peek-a-boo place in the front. Packaging does keep the slip clean and away from handling. But how are you to know about all these points I've been mentioning, if they are all hidden inside that wrapping? The time may come when we buy clothes as we do our sugar and flour -- ready packaged and well-labeled. But for the present, it is safer to choose a slip that is out for inspection.

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